

**Ways and Means Ranking Member Richard Neal**  
**Opening Statement**  
**Democratic ACA Repeal Hearing**  
**Thursday, March 16, 2017**

I thank today's witnesses for sharing your time and stories with us. Like millions of Americans across the nation, you recognize the danger posed by this legislation. Millions of middle-class Americans would be worse off while corporations and millionaires reap tax benefits.

The bill doesn't lower costs for consumers. In fact, CBO confirmed Americans would face higher costs and less value.

The bill doesn't cover everyone, as President Trump promised. CBO estimates that 24 million fewer Americans would have coverage under this Republican scheme.

The Republican bill is really a tax cut for special interests masquerading as a health care bill. The bill would cut \$880 billion from Medicaid, the program that helps pay the costs for more than 60% of all nursing home

residents nationwide. It does so to give massive tax breaks to insurance companies, and millionaires. President Trump's cabinet, with a combined net worth of \$13 billion, would benefit handsomely.

The Republican plan would harm my state of Massachusetts – by cutting Medicaid funding that is used to pay for opioid addiction treatment, long-term care, and children with special needs by cutting the tax credit that helps families afford coverage in the Mass Connector, and by letting insurance companies reduce the value of the coverage they offer you.

And we know that more uninsured means more burden on our local hospitals; we'll see job loss and hospital closures – something our communities can't afford.

Put simply, this Republican bill forces millions to pay more for less care. All while raising - not lowering - the number of uninsured Americans to 52 million.

The measure also would cut the span of Medicare by three years and \$170 billion at a time when millions of baby boomers will heavily rely on this critical program.

This legislation is a tax bill; and, as such, it fails the test set out by Secretary Mnuchin for tax reform that, “there will be no absolute tax cut for the upper class.” This bill provides a tax cut for the wealthy and health care industry of almost \$600 billion while hurting the middle class through cuts to their health care. Americans will be paying more for less.